



Family of Thomas Markland and Catherine Herchmer, Kingston, Ontario

compiled by [John A. Brebner](#)

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Generation One

1. **Thomas Markland** #212529, b. 1757 in American Colonies,¹ d. 31 January 1840 in Kingston, Frontenac County, Ontario,² buried in Lower Burial Ground, St. Paul's Churchyard, Kingston, Frontenac County, Ontario.³ .

From Jane Errington, "MARKLAND, THOMAS," in Dictionary of Canadian Biography, vol. 7, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003-, accessed June 1, 2022, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/markland_thomas_7E.html.

MARKLAND, THOMAS, businessman, militia officer, jp, and office holder; b. 1757 in the American colonies; m. 8 June 1787 Catherine Herchmer (Herkimer), and they had a son, George Herchmer Markland*; d. 31 Jan. 1840 in Kingston, Upper Canada.

Before the American revolution Thomas Markland was a large landowner in the Mohawk valley of New York. A declared loyalist, he moved in 1784 to Cataraqui (Kingston) where, in recognition of his commitment to the royalist cause, he received 24 lots, some of which he held jointly with other loyalists. Markland had, it seems, little interest in farming and kept the land as an investment, selling much of it at a profit over the next ten years. By 1788 he had entered into a lucrative partnership with another loyalist, Robert Macaulay*. The two men trans-shipped goods, opened a small retail store, and took on agency work for the congregation of St. George's Church and prominent individuals such as Sir John Johnson*. During the last years of the partnership, which was dissolved in 1792 or 1793, Markland apparently assumed increasing responsibility for the day to day operations. On his own, he exported flour and pork to Lower Canada and imported goods from the United States; he may also have had a small retail business. By 1800 he was one of Kingston's principal merchants, second only to Richard Cartwright* in the quantity of goods handled, and by the War of 1812 he had become one of the major landowners in the area. Although mercantile pursuits and land speculation together formed the basis of Markland's considerable wealth, his primary interest was the market-place.

In addition to his mercantile prominence, Markland was considered a gentleman of property and standing. His partnership with Macaulay and his marriage drew him into close personal association with two old and respected families in Kingston. Actively involved in the affairs of St George's Church, in 1789 he was one of the vestrymen who petitioned the government for land on which to erect a building, and the following year he donated money to the building fund. He rented a pew and assumed various duties: vestryman (1792), warden (1803 and 1805), and member of the committee to find a replacement for the Reverend John Stuart* (1811). The militia provided another outlet for his energies. He had enrolled in the local unit by 1791 and quickly rose to the rank of captain, a position he held in the flank company of the 1st Frontenac Militia throughout the War of 1812. He was promoted lieutenant-colonel in 1816 and colonel five years later, a rank he held until his retirement in 1839.

During the 1790s he had also begun to take a role in local affairs: he became a justice of the peace in 1794; he served in the Court of Requests; and he was a member of the committee commissioned to oversee the building of a jail. In 1796 he was appointed treasurer of the Midland District, a position he held until 1837. In 1800 he became a commissioner for determining the loyalty of prospective subjects and taking the mandatory oath of allegiance required of all new settlers. Four years later he received the appointment of commissioner for taking affidavits. At the end of the War of 1812, Markland, now 58 and one of the few original loyalists active in Kingston, was still a recognized business and social leader, who went on to acquire even more offices.

Markland continued to run his mercantile enterprises and took an increasingly active part in various organizations promoting local development. Of primary concern to Kingston merchants was the lack of banks. Markland had in August 1813 been a notable omission from the group of merchants involved with the Kingston Association, which had agreed to issue bills in exchange for specie [see Joseph Forsyth*]. In fact, he had considered it an attempt "to injure his credit." The background of this dispute is a mystery, and the acrimony surrounding it had been forgotten when in 1817 Markland became a trustee of a commercial bank proposed for Kingston, the Bank of Upper Canada. For at least three years (1818 - 21), he was the local agent for the Bank of Montreal [see John Gray*]. In 1819 Markland and several other merchants investigated the feasibility of a savings bank, which was established in 1822. He joined John Macaulay* and John Kirby in supporting the chartered Bank of Upper Canada at York (Toronto) over the "pretended" Bank of Upper Canada of Kingston [see Thomas Dalton]. In 1830 he supported the formation of the Commercial Bank of the Midland District (located in Kingston) and he served as a director in 1832.

Markland's concern for economic development was not restricted to financial institutions. He advocated the union of the Canadas in 1822, and again in 1838, as essential for commercial prosperity. In 1824 he became a member of the St Lawrence Association which had been organized to promote improving the navigability of the river. Privately, and as a justice of the peace and district treasurer, he encouraged whatever means were at hand to improve local transportation: bridges, canals, and ferries. Moreover, although not personally interested in matters such as the most efficient and productive use of land, in 1819 he had been instrumental in the formation of an agricultural society and he willingly held the post of vice-president for two years.

As a 19th-century conservative, Markland, like many others of his type, believed he had a responsibility to serve, a responsibility he continued to respect after the war. His connection with the Anglican church and church-related activities increased. Among other things, he was one of the men chosen by St George's in 1823 to oversee the building fund and subsequent erection of a new church. In 1835 he was appointed to a provincial committee investigating the use of the clergy reserves. A founding member of the Kingston Auxiliary Bible and Common Prayer Book Society, he was its president from 1819 to 1822. Throughout the 1830s he was a subscriber to, and vice-president of, the local branch of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge and president of the Kingston Auxiliary of the British and Foreign Bible Society. He also assisted other denominations. He publicly supported the building of a Presbyterian church and in 1817 he contributed to a British Wesleyan chapel in Kingston. That same year he subscribed to the British Methodist Society and in 1832 he donated money to the Wesleyan Methodist Auxiliary Missionary Society.

Until his death, Markland played a leading role in numerous educational and social institutions. His involvement with education began in 1815 when he became a trustee of the Midland District School Society; he continued to support the organization for the next 20 years and was its president in 1832. In addition he was a benefactor of the Lancasterian school [see Joseph Lancaster], supported the establishment of Union Sunday schools, subscribed to Queen's College in 1840, and served for a short time as manager of the local library. He was a founding member of a number of organizations in which he held office and to which he subscribed annually: the Kingston Compassionate Society, the Society to Provide Relief for Widows, the Emigrant Society, and the Men's Auxiliary of the Society for Promoting Education and Industry among the Indians and the Destitute. And it was Markland who in 1819 chaired meetings held in Kingston and Bath to establish relief for the poor. The same year Markland and others also took direct action to build a hospital in Kingston and he was both a shareholder and one of the trustees appointed to oversee the project. He served as president of the local temperance society in 1832.

Thomas Markland was perhaps the most influential member of the local "family compact" A firm supporter of the executive during the debates centring on Robert Gourlay* and the disturbances of 1837, he had, however, little direct contact with York officialdom. Connections with York he seems to have left to his son who, by virtue of age, personal contacts, and political beliefs, fitted into the society of the post-war capital where he had some impact on broad colonial policies. Several years before his death, Markland resigned his post as treasurer of the Midland District. "This gentleman," as the Kingston Chronicle & Gazette extolled him, "is one of the oldest and most respected inhabitants." The editors thanked him "for his long, zealous and efficient service as a public man."

Jane Errington

Thomas Markland. He has been already mentioned in connection with Mr. Macaulay, Mr. McDonell, and Capt. Hanzoost Herchmer. On May 27, 1794, he was granted 600 acres of land near the Kingston Mills, adjoining Capt. H. "Harkimer" to the northward (U. C. Land and State Book A, p. 139). As previously stated, he appears in the D. W. Smith Papers as a land claimant.

He was a J.P. and, according to the records of the Quarter Sessions of the Peace for the Midland District, he, with Mr. Atkinson and Mr. Cartwright, Sr., constituted the Court of Requests for Kingston and Pittsburgh in the year 1794. At the January Sessions in 1796 he was appointed Treasurer of the District, A. McLean, Esq., having removed from the District and so vacated the office.

Mr. Markland was the father of the Hon. George H. Markland, M.L.C., and a merchant. Mention is made of him in Mr. Cartwright's lists of exporters of flour and pork. As already stated, he was for some time in partnership with Mr. Robert Macaulay and with him was responsible for the collection of the subscriptions toward the original building fund of the Church.

He made an affidavit in the dispute over the burying ground already alluded to, setting forth, among other things, that Sir John Johnson's Second Battalion of the Royal Yorkers was in garrison at Fort Frontenac in the year 1783; that it was disbanded there in 1784; that Mr. Stuart made his first visit to the place in the latter year and moved up his family to it in 1785; that the town was laid out by Mr. Kotté, a Government surveyor in 1784; that the burying ground was under the care of the Revd. Dr. Stuart and his wardens; and that no other clergyman but Dr. Stuart ever officiated there, certainly not the Revd. Mr. Bethune, chaplain of the 84th, at Carleton Island.

On February 17, 1816, Mr. Markland was appointed one of the trustees of "a Triangular piece marked F in the Plan of Kingston for the purpose of erecting thereon a Lancasterian School." In U.C. Land Book I, p. 324, his co-trustees appear to have been The Revd. G. O. Stuart, Mr. "Allen" McLean, Mr. Lawrence Herchmer, and Mr. William Mitchell. On August 28, 1818, Messrs. Markland, McLean, and Mitchell were granted the market-place in trust. It was stipulated that the municipality should neither ask nor receive any compensation if the land should be wanted by Government for fortifications (U. C. Land Book J, p. 386).

"To assist in supporting the Hospital," the Revd. G. O. Stuart, Mr. McLean, and Mr. Markland were made trustees of "a triangular piece of land of six acres near Kingston vacant and grantable." Apparently they had applied for Lots 436, 437, 438, and 439, North St., "if said street opposite these Lots be included in the Grant, they will afford sufficient space for an Hospital and spacious Gardens in an high and airy Situation." But North St. was already shut up by the grant for the burial ground (U. C. Land Book J, p.418).

A. H. YOUNG, [Archibald Hope Young, 1863-1936]
of Trinity College, Toronto, for The Kingston Historical Society, Kingston, Ontario; The British Whig Publishing Company Limited 1921.

He married **Catherine (Herchmer) Herkimer** #212530, 08 June 1787,¹ b. 07 August 1765 in New York State (daughter of **Hanzoost (Johan Jost) Herkimer** #212531 [Army Captain] and **Mary (Maria) Van Allen** #212532), d. 31 January 1840 in Kingston, Frontenac County, Ontario.

Catherine:

Had only one child, George Herchmer MARKLAND.

Verify death location.. not Kingston, Ontario?

Children:

2. i. **George Herchmer Markland #212533** b. c. 1790.

Generation Two

2. **George Herchmer Markland #212533**, b. c. 1790 in Kingston, Frontenac County, Ontario,⁴ occupation MLC, Upper Canada,⁵ occupation Merchant in Kingston,⁵ d. 17 May 1862 in Kingston, Frontenac County, Ontario.⁴

MARKLAND, GEORGE HERCHMER (Herkimer), public servant; b. about 1790 at Kingston, Upper Canada, the only child of Thomas Markland* and Catherine Herchmer (Herkimer); his wife Anna died in 1847; d. 17 May 1862 at Kingston.

George Herchmer Markland, son of a prominent Kingston merchant, was educated by John Strachan at Cornwall. In 1810 the Reverend John Stuart* wrote of him as “a good, indeed an excellent young man” who wished to enter the Anglican ministry. In the same year John Beverley Robinson described Markland, then 20 years old, as “a good fellow, and very friendly,” but added: “I prefer seeing a person at his age rather more manly and not quite so feminine either in speech or action.” Markland did not enter the ministry. During the War of 1812 he served as an ensign in a company of Frontenac militia commanded by his uncle, Lawrence Herchmer (Herkimer).

In 1820 Markland unsuccessfully contested the riding of Kingston against fellow Tory, Christopher Alexander Hagerman*. Within a few weeks of his defeat he was appointed to the Legislative Council, probably through the influence of Strachan. Two years later, at age 32, he was made an honorary member of the Executive Council and, in 1827, a regular member. He was also appointed to the Provincial Board of Education in 1822. Though Markland spent several years in England in the mid-1820s, his absence from Upper Canada did not slow his advancement in the government. In 1828 he was appointed secretary receiver of the Upper Canada Clergy Corporation which administered the leasing of the clergy reserves. In the same year he became registrar of King’s College, chartered in 1827, and was later involved with Sir John Colborne in the creation of Upper Canada College. From 1831 to 1838 he was also secretary and treasurer of the board responsible for the collection of money from the sale of school lands, and from 1828 to 1836 he served as an Upper Canadian arbitrator in the division of customs revenue between Upper and Lower Canada. In his positions of trust and in his roles as legislative and executive councillor Markland completely supported Strachan’s religious and educational goals. In 1836, for example, he, Peter Robinson*, and Joseph Wells* formed the Executive Council which assented to Colborne’s endowment of 43 Anglican rectories. In May 1833 he reached the apex of his career when he was made inspector general of public accounts. As in his previous positions of fiscal responsibility, he worked diligently and efficiently; he was, to all appearances, a model bureaucrat deserving the emulation of his fellow officials.

In June 1838 reports began to circulate in Toronto that Markland’s habits were “derogatory to his character as a public officer.” Lieutenant Governor Sir George Arthur* determined upon an investigation by executive councillors Robert Baldwin Sullivan*, William Allan*, Augustus Warren Baldwin, John Elmsley, and William Henry Draper*. Markland agreed that an inquiry was necessary to clear his name and unsuccessfully attempted to have Strachan made the sole investigator. Largely through circumstantial evidence, Markland was accused of having had sexual liaisons with a number of young men. Two witnesses stated during the inquiry that he had purchased the discharges of several young soldiers and had supported a law student allegedly in return for anticipated sexual favours, although those who had accepted his financial aid denied having been parties to illicit relationships. The law student, Frederick Creighton Muttlebury, stated that he had ended his financial dependence upon the inspector general because of Markland’s increasingly bold and possessive attitude but he too denied any “criminality” on Markland’s

part. Margaret Powell, housekeeper of the government buildings, claimed that Markland had often met young men in the evenings at his office, and that on one occasion, while listening at his door, she had heard “such movements as convinced me that there was a female in the room, with whom some person was in connection,” but only Markland and a young drummer emerged from the office. Another witness claimed that during a walk on the outskirts of town in 1835 “Markland had . . . put his hand in an indecent manner on my brother’s person.” Markland maintained his innocence to Arthur, and defended his private acts of benevolence, but did not testify on his own behalf. The week-long inquiry was quietly dropped in return for Markland’s resignation as inspector general. His career in ruins, Markland returned to Kingston to live in virtual isolation. In the following month, after being pressed by his fellow officers, he resigned his commission as colonel in the Frontenac militia. He had resigned from the Executive Council in 1836 and was not re-appointed a legislative councillor in 1841. He never again held any public office.

Markland’s problems did not end with his virtual banishment. In 1841 a legislative committee, chaired by John Simcoe Macaulay*, discovered that Markland as treasurer of the school lands fund was in default almost £5,000 for the period 1831–38. He did not deny responsibility for the deficit; the government was reimbursed through occasional payments and provisions in his will. In the mid-1840s Markland barely escaped civil suit by the council of King’s College for his role in using college funds for the erection of Upper Canada College. Strachan intervened on his behalf and convinced the council that Markland had merely been acting on the orders of Sir John Colborne.

In 1838 Markland was a leading member of the Family Compact, probably ranking second only to J. B. Robinson among Strachan’s protégés. His political and social eclipse was abrupt. No hint of the sexual scandal appeared in the contemporary press, and the account of it rests on official reports. Today only a few of Markland’s letters remain, scattered in the correspondence of his friends and associates. Whether the charges made against him in 1838 were accurate or the result of gossip and innuendo will probably never be known with certainty. The witnesses, including two labourers, a gardener, a soldier, a servant, and a housekeeper, as well as a merchant, a law student, and a government clerk, seemed as shocked by the familiarity with which Markland, a gentleman, treated members of the lower class, as they were by the nature of the conduct of which he stood accused. Even the exact circumstances surrounding his defalcations from the school lands account remain unknown. He may have been guilty of no more than careless accounting, a common fault among 19th century Canadian officials. His sudden departure from office could have prevented him from balancing his accounts and led ultimately to charges being laid against him. The passing of his peers in the Family Compact elicited glowing eulogies from Reform and Conservative newspapers alike, but Markland’s death in 1862 was noted in the Kingston Daily British Whig and in the Globe by identical two-line obituaries. Almost a century later W. S. Wallace* noted “the almost Egyptian darkness” which has obscured Markland’s career.

Robert J. Burns, "MARKLAND, GEORGE HERCHMER," in Dictionary of Canadian Biography, vol. 9, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003-, accessed June 1, 2022, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/markland_george_herschmer_9E.html.

He married **Anna Aird** #243542, 04 January 1812 in Christ Church Anglican Cathedral, Montreal, Quebec,⁶ b. c. 05 January 1786 in Rosemarkie, Ross-shire, Scotland (daughter of **Robert Aird** #307357 [Merchant in Montreal] and **Janet Findlay** #307358), d. c. 27 May 1847 in Kingston, Frontenac County, Ontario,⁴ buried in St. Paul's Churchyard, Kingston, Frontenac County, Ontario.

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- ¹ Jane Errington, "MARKLAND, THOMAS," in Dictionary of Canadian Biography, vol. 7, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003-, accessed June 1, 2022, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/markland_thomas_7E.html.
 - ² "The Loyalists in Ontario, the Sons and Daughters of The American Loyalists of Upper Canada", William D. REID, 1973.
 - ³ Historic Kingston, No. 4, Transactions of the Kingston Historical Society for 1954 - 1955; Ed. Richard Preston.
 - ⁴ Robert J. Burns, "MARKLAND, GEORGE HERCHMER," in Dictionary of Canadian Biography, vol. 9, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003 -, accessed June 1, 2022, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/markland_george_herchmer_9E.html.
 - ⁵ The Parish Register of Kingston Upper Canada 1785-1811; Edited with Notes and Introduction by A. H. YOUNG.
 - ⁶ Drouin Collection Anglican Church Records, Christ Church Cathedral, Montreal; Witnesses: Robert MCKENZIE, John AIRD.

